

August 26, 2002

Title~ First Name~ Last Name~ Title2~
Company~
Address~
City~, State~ Zip~

Re: Seeking active stakeholders for an Early Action Plan regarding
ground level ozone reduction in South Carolina

Dear Title~ Last Name~:

Protecting our natural resources is a responsibility that we all share in our day-to-day lives. The actions we take whether at work, home, or somewhere in between all have an impact on the quality and quantity of the land we use, the water we drink, and the air we breathe. The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (Department) is committed to ensuring that all of our natural resources are protected and left in a manner that provides for a healthy environment for all to enjoy. The Department's Bureau of Air Quality is responsible for making sure that ambient (outdoor) air quality in South Carolina remains healthy to breathe. This includes meeting strict National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

Our State has been proud to say that we enjoy some of the cleanest air in the United States; however, expanding populations, increasing industrial development, and more mobile sources (cars, trucks, etc.) will make it difficult to maintain that status. Specifically, increases in each of those areas and a more stringent NAAQS for ground-level ozone will make remaining in attainment (compliance) difficult.

Non-attainment has severe consequences; the biggest being the impact to public health. From an economic perspective there are other consequences that come automatically as a result of non-attainment designations. Those consequences include additional permitting requirements and potential loss of federal funds for roadway projects and other federal requirements as a means for addressing an air quality problem. While we certainly do not wish to diminish the results derived from such requirements, we would prefer to move forward with measures that both achieve cleaner air before federal mandates would be imposed and that make sense for South Carolina.

On August 23, 2002, a Notice of Drafting was published in the *State Register* expressing our desire to pursue an Early Action Plan that provides for ambient air in South Carolina that meets the more restrictive federal standard prior to the deadline(s). Such an action will be quite an undertaking and not easily accomplished given the time allowed, but it is possible. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has provided an option for areas, like those in South Carolina, to attain the new standard by a certain date and obtain cleaner air sooner and avoid the aforementioned mandatory requirements.

Successfully completing such a task cannot be accomplished without the active participation of local, state, and federal government, as well as citizens, public interest groups, and the business community. As a steward of our state's environment, I would hope that you and/or your organization would consider taking this challenge with us. Enclosed with this letter is a fact sheet covering some of the basics of our approach and a list of informational forums scheduled throughout the State.

Should you need additional information or have questions, or if you wish to participate in this process, please contact Henry Phillips at (803) 898-3260 or by e-mail at phillimh@dhec.state.sc.us. Also, please visit our website for this and additional information at www.scdhec.net/baq/eap.html. Thank you for your time and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James A. Joy, III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a stylized "J" and "I".

James A. Joy, III, P.E., Chief
Bureau of Air Quality

/rrb

Attachments